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Romanian officials pledge cooperation

WASHINGTON (BP) — The president of Romania, Emil Constantinescu, and the prime minister, Victor Ciorbea, assured a delegation of Baptist leaders of their commitment to religious freedom, according to a news report from the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

An apology also was extended for a beating of nine Baptists in the village of Ruginoasa last Easter, the BWA reported.

After the beating outside a house used for worship, Constantinescu had ordered an investigation and last May called a summit to determine the rights of evangelicals in Romania.

The Baptist World Alliance at the time called upon the Romanian government to investigate the lack of police protection to protect the Baptists from a crowd of several hundred citizens.

Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary who led the delegation with Vasile Talos, president of the Baptist Union of Romania, said Constantinescu and Ciorbea both, though Orthodox, gave assurances of religious

freedom during the Nov. 21 meeting in Bucharest.

The two officials stated there is little chance of a law like the one in Russia being passed in Romania, although Romania is predominantly Orthodox.

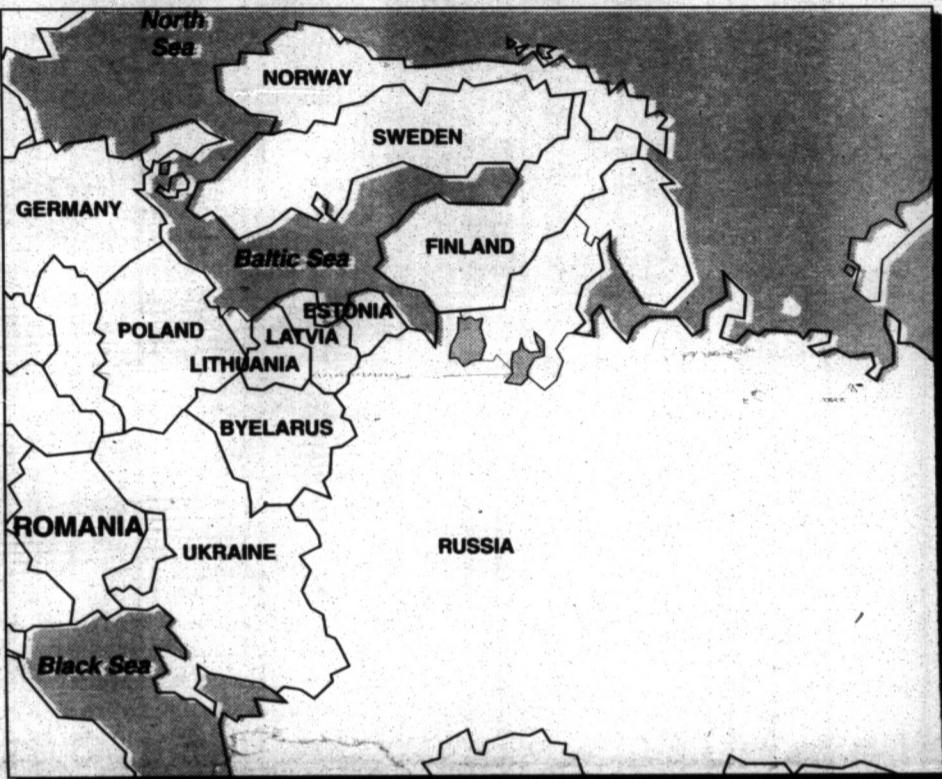
Constantinescu, elected in 1996 to succeed former communist leader Ion Iliescu, is known for an openness to change and reform.

Formerly rector and professor of geology at the University of Bucharest, he was the key person who enabled the Baptist Seminary to establish at the university a Baptist faculty of Protestant Theology.

Vasile Talos, president of the Baptist seminary in Romania, also is director of the Baptist Faculty at the university.

Lotz said Constantinescu "knows Baptists well from his visits to the United States."

Karl Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation and BWA



regional secretary for Europe who was part of the delegation, thanked the two Romanian leaders for their new openness to religious freedom as a marked contrast to former leaders.

Carlyle Driggers, executive secretary of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, who had just signed a partnership agreement with Romanian Baptists, told Constantinescu that South Carolina Baptists will help Baptists build, educate leaders, and bring dental and other medical help.

The Baptist leaders also visited with Orthodox Patriarch Teoctist with whom Lotz discussed the proposed Baptist/Orthodox conversations.

The BWA is waiting on the decision of the 15 autocephalous Orthodox groups whether they will agree to hold such conversations.

For Romanian Baptists, however, this was a most important visit as, on the suggestion of the patriarch, it opened the way for further conversations between Romanian Baptists and the Orthodox.

Lotz said he told the patriarch the BWA is opposed to proselytism, something the Orthodox accuse evangelicals of doing, and spoke about the suffering Baptists had endured during the 16th century until the 19th.

Looking back

10 years ago

About 50 Gulf Coast Baptists and a few people of other denominations picket the gambling ship berthed at Biloxi's Cadet Point, on the night some 40 members of the Mississippi Legislature are given a free trip on the boat (minus any gambling expenses).

20 years ago

Bethel Church, Amite County, burns to the ground in the early morning hours of Jan. 11. The fire of undetermined origin completely destroys the two-story educational building and auditorium. Pastor Willie Crawley says members have already decided to "rebuild everything."

30 years ago

Roxie Church completes a modern pastor's home at the cost of approximately \$10,000. The Woman's Missionary Union has tripled in number, and the Sunday School is enjoying the largest enrollment in the church's history.

TLW rallies scheduled

Super Rallies are being held in four locations across the nation in January to support the Valentine's Eve "True Love Waits Goes Campus" event.

Created and sponsored by the Sunday School Board, True Love Waits (TLW) is an international campaign that challenges teenagers and college students to remain sexually abstinent until marriage.

The "Goes Campus" campaign is an effort to have TLW commitment cards displayed on every secondary school campus in America.

Student leaders are expected to report results to the national True Love Waits team by Feb. 27. On April 14, True Love Waits leaders deliver a full report (including the name of every public and private school participating and the number of students on each campus making the TLW commitment) to the offices of the President of the United States, state governors, and key state and national legislators.

Locations and dates for the Super Rallies are: First Church, Richardson, Texas, Jan. 22; First Church, Concord, Tenn., Jan. 29; First Church, Spartanburg, S.C., Jan. 30; and Warner Robins Civic Center, Warner Robins, Ga., Jan. 31.

All Super Rally events begin at 7 p.m., and tickets are available at Christian book stores in the areas of the rallies. For more information on the rallies, email Mshipsey@aol.com, or call 615-251-2971.



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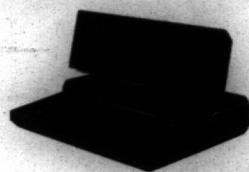
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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318 million acts of worship

People are reluctant to talk about it. Southerners in particular are taught from an early age that it's undignified to bring up the subject in refined company. Baptists specifically shy away from discussing it, out of concern that people will think our focus is in the wrong place.

Sometimes, though, you've just got to talk about money, and this is one of those times.

The final accountings have been completed for the gifts Mississippi Baptists gave to the work of our Lord in the 1997 calendar year and the numbers are, well, breathtaking. There is simply no modest way to describe it.

Total statewide receipts at the church level last year were \$318,700,854. That's not a typo, and all the commas are in the proper places. Mississippi Baptists gave nearly *one-third of a billion dollars* at the local church level during 1997.

That figure includes all contributions, such as Cooperative Program gifts, missions offerings, and any other monies reported as church total receipts on the Annual Church Profile survey conducted by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Mississippi Baptists also used the Cooperative Program (CP) portion of that 1997 total to set another CP giving record.

Total CP gifts of \$26,086,167 fully funded the 1997 basic budget of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) and also funded the challenge portion of the budget, meaning missions and Christian higher education received additional funding above the amounts already included in the basic budget. (See page three of this issue for details.)

The good news about our giving doesn't

stop there. Mississippi Baptists also retained their perennial leadership in giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO), which supports 4,000 missionaries around the world who seek to answer the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) with our support.

For 1996 (the last year for which figures are available), Mississippi was the number one state in three of the four major LMCO giving categories listed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

None of the dollar figures, however, can begin to encompass the enormous amount of time and talent Mississippi Baptist volunteers pour into the Lord's work. From Backyard Bible Clubs in Venezuela to total reconstruction of a burned African-American church in Amite County, Mississippi Baptists respond.

There's only one explanation. Mississippi Baptists understand who we are, and *whose* we are. We are a consecrated people, set aside for our Lord's work. We know that to whom much is given, much is expected, and we're apparently comfortable with that fact.

Just for today — however impolite it may seem — take some time to think about the money. Think about the money in the con-

"THE SECRET, SIR, IS TO STOP THINKING OF IT AS YOUR MONEY."



text of what it means to the Kingdom. Think about the money as a crucial link in helping to win Mississippi and the world to Jesus.

As Mississippi Baptist Convention Board member recently remarked, "Every dollar given represents an act of worship."

May these 318 million acts of worship be found acceptable in the sight of our Heavenly Father.

GUEST OPINION



Take a stand for life

By Monica Baldwin, member
Crossgates Church, Brandon



SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY

January 18, 1998

reaping what we sowed by our silence. We didn't stand up and fight as Christ's warriors for righteousness. The good news is that it's not too late to take a stand for life!

We serve a merciful, wonderful, awesome God. Make January 18 a significant day in your life. On what better day to resolve your involvement in the good fight of God-created human life than on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday?

Involvement may vary from individual to individual. The key to finding your place of involvement is earnest prayer. God calls some of us to the front line.

Others who are not physically able to "go to the streets" may be asked of the Lord to volunteer time at a pro-life organization.

Still others, who God has blessed financially, may be asked of him to share their financial resources with a pro-life organization. The opportunities of involvement are endless!

Over thirty-five million deaths to the youngest, most innocent of the human race are not pleasing in God's sight.

I plead with you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, to become involved wherever and however the Lord leads you. You have the key to involvement — prayer. Now turn the key into obedience.

Baldwin is capitol correspondent for American Family Radio and also serves as a Rankin County election commissioner.

Legislators open session with mountain of bills

By Paul G. Jones II, Ex. Dir.
Christian Action Commission

The 1998 session of the Mississippi Legislature convened at noon on January 6. Over 1,000 bills, resolutions, and constitutional amendments have been filed, with about 3,000 bills expected to be introduced before the session ends in mid-April.

The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC) will provide updates and information through The Baptist Record on legislative items of interest to Mississippi Baptists. In addition, information may be received by contacting CAC at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. Items introduced thus far include:

Abortion

House Bill (HB) 376 allows a woman injured in the course of an abortion to file suit within ten years for damages to the mother or unborn child attributable to the termination of a pregnancy.

Adoption

HB173 and **Senate Bill (SB) 2126** provide a state income tax credit of \$5,000 for the year that a child is legally adopted (making adoption economically possible for more people).

Alcohol

HB 20 makes unlawful the sale of alcoholic beverages, light wines, and/or beer from any building or structure that is designed for a motor vehicle to drive by, in, or through.

HB 35 and **HB 592** revises the legal Driving under the Influence (DUI) blood alcohol content (BAC) for minors to less than .02. (**HB 592** appears to be the better bill as it conforms to new federal mandates on alcohol consumption and minors.)

HB 68 authorizes the creation of brewpubs — small breweries in restaurants and lounges which can each produce up to 40,300 gallons annually of an alcoholic beverage.

HB 386 makes it illegal for holders of state Alcohol Beverage Control permits for on-premises sales to allow per-

sons under the age of twenty-one to be present. (This would not apply to restaurants.)

Children

HB 54 requires the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) to monitor how child support money is being used by the recipient.

SB 2001 creates a committee to study the feasibility of creating a new state Department of Children and Family Programs.

SB 2059 protects "whistle blower" employees of a child care facility who report child abuse at the facility.

Church and state

HB 82 provides sales tax exemption to churches and religious associations for the purchase of tangible personal property or services. (This could greatly reduce the cost of operations for many churches.)

SB 2070 allows voluntary benedictions, invocations, or prayers by student volunteers on public property during non-compulsory school assemblies, sporting events, and commencement ceremonies.

Gambling

HB 99 prohibits bingo games within 1,500 feet of a library, school, nursing home, hospital, or church.

HB 157, HB 158, and HB 374 establish the Mississippi Horse Racing Commission and/or the Mississippi Dog Racing Commission, and allow every county in the state to conduct local option elections on pari-mutuel gambling on animals.

HB 313 prohibits automatic teller machines (ATM) and other cash- or credit-producing machines from the premises of casinos and other gambling establishments.

Marriage

HB 185 requires counseling by a licensed counselor or clergymen prior to the granting of a marriage license.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

Record

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No. 48

Miss. Baptists answer \$2 million challenge

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communications Director

December's \$2.5 million in Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) gifts brought the 1997 state CP total past \$26 million — nearly \$2 million over the basic amount budgeted by Mississippi Baptists a year ago, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) which disburses the funds.

In addition, total 1997 CP receipts of \$26,086,167 were \$1,697,997 (6.96%) more than CP gifts given in 1996. The December CP total of \$2,528,395 was only the third largest monthly total for 1997. Totals ranged from \$2,922,651 in January to \$1,625,620 in November.

The nearly \$2 million given above the basic budget will go into the challenge portion of the budget, which provides direct funding for international, North American, and Mississippi Baptist missions as well as Christian higher education in Mississippi.

Messengers to the 1996 Mississippi Baptist Convention voted that all monies over the basic 1997 CP budget of \$24,145,086 be placed in the CP challenge budget. Final accounting for 1997 indicates \$1,941,080.71 was given toward the challenge portion of the CP budget.

Messengers approved a CP challenge budget distribution formula of:

- 20% to the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board (\$388,216.14).
- 20% to Mississippi missions (\$388,216.14).
- 10% to the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board (\$194,108.07).
- 50% to Mississippi Christian higher education (\$970,540.36).

"What an enormous testimony to the commitment of Mississippi Baptists to Christian education and foreign missions and all the work of God, and what a recommendation regarding the work and

leadership of our dedicated pastors and other church leaders," said Causey.

"Our Lord, of course, is the object of that commitment and the inspiration for its achievement — to him be our praise and gratitude and the glory. We must continue to lift him up that he will draw all men unto himself," he stressed.

David Michel, MBCB Stewardship Director, praised the dedication of Mississippi Baptists and noted that members of the state's 2,000 Southern Baptist churches gave a total of \$318,700,854 at the local church level in 1997.

"In other words, Mississippi Baptists gave an average of over \$6,000,000 each week through their local congregations," Michel said.

The portion of the challenge budget earmarked for Mississippi missions requires approval for disbursement by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee.

The Christian education funds are distributed among the three Mississippi Baptist-affiliated colleges according to a formula devised by the Mississippi Baptist Christian Education Commission, whose function is to make equitable divisions of CP allocations given to the colleges.

Blue Mountain College (BMC) in Blue Mountain will receive \$170,912.16 (17.61%), while Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton will receive \$417,235.30 (42.99%) and William Carey College in Hattiesburg will receive \$382,392.90 (39.4%) of the challenge budget funds set aside for Christian higher education.

BMC President Harold Fisher spoke of the timing of the finances. "We are renovating Whitfield Dormitory and the bids exceeded the funds on hand by a considerable amount. This excluded the furnishings, which would cost an estimated \$110,000.

"This (funding) will make it possible for us to complete this project, so we've (approved) the contract. It's to be completed by July of this year and available for the students in the fall."

Fisher said additional plans to renovate the auditorium at Blue Mountain could now move forward.

MC President Howell W. Todd said, "We are very, very pleased at the response to the Cooperative Program by Mississippi Baptists. It demonstrates caring and a commitment to programs that are supported by Mississippi Baptists.

"We have considerable demands that are placed on us in upgrading equipment and providing appropriate technology for today's students and we will be using the funds in those areas."

1997 MISSISSIPPI COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Basic budget goal	\$24,145,086.00
Gifts	\$26,086,166.71
Challenge funds	\$ 1,941,080.71

CHALLENGE

(50% for missions)

International missions (20%)	\$388,216.14
Mississippi missions (20%)	\$388,216.14
North American missions (10%)	\$194,108.07

(50% for Christian higher education)

Mississippi College (42.99)	\$417,235.30
William Carey College (39.4%)	\$382,392.90
Blue Mountain College (17.61%)	\$170,912.16

Source: MBCB Business Office

Pro-life leaders mark abortion anniversary



SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY
January 18, 1998



ENDING ABORTION — Right to Life of Jackson President Tonya Britton (at podium) speaks at a Jan. 8 press conference at the New Capitol in Jackson, called to announce Governor Kirk Fordice's proclamation of January as the Month of Prayer to End Abortion. Present at the press conference were Mark Garriga (left), Fordice's chief of staff, and Paul Jones (second from left), executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

WASHINGTON (BP) — As the 25th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision nears, the nationwide pro-life movement the famous U.S. Supreme Court ruling gave birth to has been doing some self-evaluation.

Pro-life Americans have a quarter of a century of devastation to look back on, 25 years of mixed results, at best, for their efforts.

They have an uncertain future to look toward, one that some say requires a new strategy.

When Jan. 22 arrives, it will mark "one of the saddest and most tragic anniversaries in the history of the American nation," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

On that date in 1973, the

high court issued an opinion in a case from Texas that wiped out the abortion laws of all the states. Combined with a companion case from Georgia, the decision had the practical effect of legalizing abortion through the ninth month for any reason offered by a mother.

As a result, an estimated 37 million babies — three of every 10 children conceived — have

died through abortion since Roe v. Wade. That is an average of about 1.5 million a year.

Care Net President Guy Condon, former president of Americans United for Life, believes the pro-life movement has learned an important lesson, one which signals hope for the future.

"I think we are at one of the most exciting times ever in the history of the pro-life movement, because people have come to realize it's not about politics, it's not about the courts — it's about reaching out to a lost and dying generation," he said.

Unlike Land and Condon, pro-life author Frederica Mathewes-Green argues the movement is at a standstill and still needs to revise its strategy to a more personal approach.

Instead of focusing on changing the law, persuasion needs to become the central strategy for pro-lifers, she wrote in an article in the Jan. 12 issue of Christianity Today.

In interviewing groups of post-abortion women, Mathewes-Green said she discovered a "woman is most likely to choose abortion in order to please or protect people that she cares about."

"Often she discovers too late that there is another person to whom she has an obligation: Her own unborn child."

Though the ultimate aim is to provide legal protection for the unborn, a "more realistic goal for pro-life advocates is to bring about, through both active listening and gentle persuasion, a gradual dawning of the conviction that we can live without abortion," she said.

"Eventually that may result in a cultural consensus to make it illegal once more."

Mississippi Baptists urged to join in 'Twenty-Five is Enough' observance

The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC) is encouraging Baptists across the state to participate in "Twenty-Five is Enough," a nationwide 25-day observance of the 25th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe V. Wade and Doe V. Bolton decisions that legalized abortion in America.

The observance coincides

with Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on Jan. 18 in churches across the Southern Baptist Convention.

"CAC is calling upon the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention to support and participate in the prayer vigil and awareness campaign marking the twenty-five years since the legalization of abortion in our nation. The campaign, endorsed through a resolution by messengers to the 1997 Mississippi Baptist Convention, is a call to responsible Christian action and plea to remember the over 30 million babies who have lost their lives," he said.

Jones recommended that Mississippi Baptist churches and individual Mississippi Baptists:

- ◆ establish a prayer vigil committed to daily prayer that legislative and judicial leaders will affirm the sanctity of human life.
- ◆ pray continually during a single 25-hour period to end abortion in America.

◆ attend and support local observances.

◆ attend and support the statewide candlelight prayer vigil that begins at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 17, on the south steps of the New Capitol Building in Jackson.

◆ encourage in their local churches the use of Sanctity of Human Life lessons and materials in Sunday School on January 18.

◆ discuss in Discipleship Training and other study groups the meaning and purpose of human life.

◆ encourage pastors to preach on the sanctity of human life during the proclaimed "Month of Prayer to End Abortion," especially on Jan. 18 for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

For more information on "Twenty-Five is Enough," the "Month of Prayer to End Abortion" in Mississippi, and other pro-life activities around the state, contact CAC at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Reported new technique may lead to earlier abortions

HOUSTON (BP) — As early as eight days. That's how soon an abortion can be performed after conception in a new abortion technique available at 23 Planned Parenthood clinics across the country.

The new abortion technique, called "manual vacuum aspiration," or MVA, involves:

◆ a hand-held syringe instead of the vacuum pump typically used in later abortions. The syringe device can be deployed in developing countries where electricity is not always available, news reports noted.

◆ better ultrasound imaging of the gestational sac in its earliest stages.

◆ more sensitive pregnancy tests to detect pregnancy as soon as the embryo is implanted in the womb, long before a woman has missed a menstrual period.

The new MVA technique poses yet another challenge to pro-life groups in saving unborn children and in ministering to the emotional health of post-abortion women.

"The use of abortion at any time after life has begun kills a unique and irreplaceable member of the human family," the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) said in a written reaction to news of the abortion breakthrough was reported by

The New York Times Dec. 21 and other media across the country.

The National Right to Life Committee, the nation's largest pro-life group, has more than 3,000 chapters nationwide.

"As soon as an egg is fertilized, it starts growing into a human being with its own individual DNA, different from its parents," Laura Echevarria, NRLC director of media relations, told The Times.

"This is still innocent blood being shed," Flip Benham, national director of Operation Rescue, told USA Today Dec. 22. "This is life. And it doesn't matter what mechanics they use to kill it."

Gloria Feldt, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said the new manual vacuum aspiration abortion technique is performed at such an early stage in pregnancy that the "size of the tissue is tiny, minuscule really," according to USA Today.

Michael Burnhill, Planned Parenthood's vice president for medical affairs, predicted many women will prefer the MVA surgical procedure over "morning-after" abortion pills sanctioned by the federal Food and Drug Administration in February 1997.

The MVA syringe technique can be per-

formed in a few minutes, without days of bleeding and cramping caused by abortion drugs, Burnhill said.

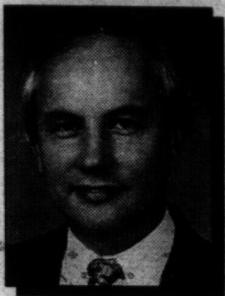
The "morning-after" method involves a course of birth control pills taken orally at higher doses than normal and begun within 72 hours after sexual intercourse.

Manual vacuum aspiration was pioneered by Jerry Edwards, medical-director at Planned Parenthood in Houston.

The New York Times reported that Edwards has performed more than 2,400 "very early abortions" since 1994.

10th annual
Candlelight Prayer Vigil
to end abortion
Jan. 17, 1998
New Capitol Building
Jackson, MS
7:00 p.m.
Right to Life of Mississippi
Education and Research Foundation, Inc.
(601) 352-8636

1998 Evangelism Conference slated for Jan. 19-20



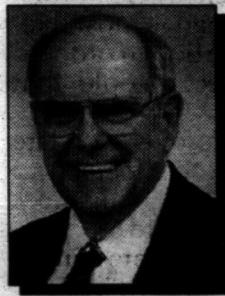
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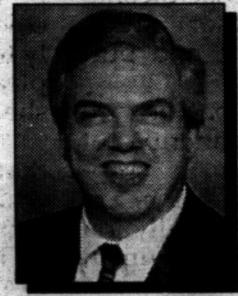
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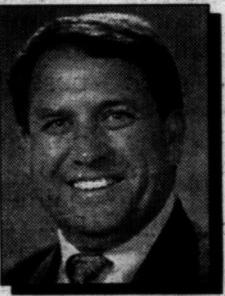
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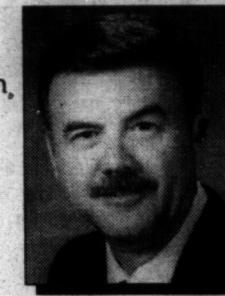
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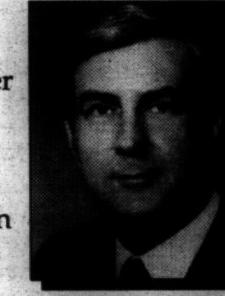
Parker



Smith



Carter



Smith



Butler

MONDAY AFTERNOON — 1:30 PM
Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson

Welcome/prayer	Frank Thomas	Praise/worship	Ronnie Cottingham
Praise/worship	Ronnie Cottingham	Message	Chuck Kelley
Message	Richard Leach	Praise/worship	Ronnie
Recognition of leading churches in baptisms	Sonny Adkins	Cottingham Message	Luther Price

MONDAY EVENING — 7:00 PM
Mississippi Coliseum, Downtown Jackson

"God With Us"
A Gift of Celebration

TUESDAY MORNING — 9:00 AM
Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson

Welcome/prayer	Paul Harrell
Praise/worship	Bob Jones
Mormon Puzzle	Jim Furr

TUESDAY AFTERNOON — 1:30 PM
Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson

Welcome/prayer	William H. Perkins, Jr.	Praise/worship	Bo Parker
Praise/worship	Bo Parker	Message	Billy Smith
Message	Jim Butler	Praise/worship	Bo Parker
Recog. of Voc. Evang.	Sonny Adkins	Message	Charles Carter

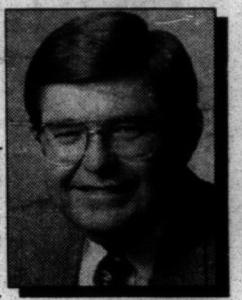
TUESDAY EVENING — 6:30 PM
Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson

Singing Churchmen	Bill Causey	Brown/Davis Recon.	Richard Brogan
Welcome/prayer	Graham Smith	Praise/worship	Graham Smith
Praise/Worship	Chuck Kelley	Message	Charles Carter
Message		Benediction	

A special gift

Dear Friend,

This is your personal invitation to receive a "Gift of Celebration" in the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson at 7 p.m. on Monday, January 19. This exciting event will be the Monday evening session of the 1998 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference (all other sessions will be held at Alta Woods Church, Jackson).



Adkins

The evening's performance of "God With Us," a cooperative effort between the Evangelism and Church Music Departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), will feature a 2,500-voice choir and a 200-piece orchestra under the direction of L. Graham Smith, director of the MBCB Church Music Department.

Every seat in the coliseum is free. No offering will be taken. Along with this "Gift of Celebration," Mississippi Baptists want to offer another gift — the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. That's where you come in.

Bring a car-, van-, or bus-load of people to the coliseum, and make sure at least half the people you bring are unsaved. Then be in prayer that at the time of invitation, we will see the greatest single ingathering of souls in the history of the Mississippi Baptist Convention!

Join us January 19 as we help bring Mississippi to Jesus.

Sonny Adkins, Director
MBCB Evangelism Dept.

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 1998 • 7 P.M. • MISSISSIPPI COLISEUM

INTERSTATE 55 NORTH AT HIGH STREET, JACKSON, MS

100 CHURCHES PARTICIPATING

200 MEMBER ORCHESTRA

2500+ SINGERS

A gift to our Lord and all people

For more information on the events listed on this page, contact the MBCB Evangelism Department at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

The Road to Everlasting Life

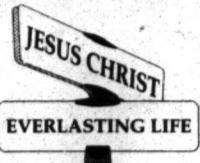
God intends for all his children to live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

Admit that you are a sinner.
There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

Accept God's love for you.
God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

Acknowledge Christ as Lord.
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.



WMU's training program gains accolades

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — A daily newspaper has voiced praise for Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and local church volunteers, upon the first commencement for clients of the Birmingham Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), a job training program for women living in poverty initiated by the national WMU in 1996.

The Birmingham News observed in a Dec. 29, 1997, editorial, "When it comes to helping the poor get in a better position to help themselves, it's no secret that private charities often can do a much more efficient, longer-lasting job than government."

"That is why it's so heartening that a good number of churches in the Birmingham area are about to start programs to help move women from welfare to work," the editorial continued. "It's the perfect time for such an effort since fall 1998 is the time welfare recipients in the state must find work (or take part in some type of jobs program) or lose benefits."

The editorial went on to praise the components of CWJC, which is Christian in context and emphasizes one-

on-one mentoring between client and volunteer.

"One of the more appealing aspects of the program... is that it will pair each welfare recipient with an individual, trained worker who will be there for support in the long haul. In other words, neither the woman on welfare nor the person who mentors her will be a faceless client or bureaucrat, but instead two people actually dealing with each other on an individual basis.

"This program has such a potential for good that it ought to be part of the ministry of practically every church in Alabama," the editorial concluded. "Praise those involved already and those that will undoubtedly join later."

The editorial was the second such comment made by the Birmingham editors about CWJC. The first came June 18, 1997, when the editorial staff wrote, "The Woman's Missionary Union is providing a much-needed service. It's a blessing sure to help keep our most needy families from becoming casualties of state and national welfare reform efforts."

CWJC has received similar

accolades throughout 1997 as the training program gained national and local recognition. Among the recognitions were:

◆ CWJC gained WMU a runner-up distinction in the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty's 1997 Samaritan Awards. The Acton Institute is a nonprofit educational entity that seeks to familiarize the religious and business communities with the moral dimensions of a free society. It seeks to recognize individuals, churches, and religious charitable organizations helping to meet social and economic needs.

◆ CWJC was named a charter member organization to Vice President Al Gore's Welfare to Work Coalition to Sustain Success. Trudy Johnson, special projects manager for WMU, serves on the coalition that meets quarterly to discuss challenges and successes in helping welfare recipients gain self-sufficiency.

◆ The San Antonio CWJC was awarded the Lifelong Learning Award from the San Antonio Literacy Commission.

◆ A gift of \$1,000 was given to the WMU Foundation to initiate a CWJC endowment fund.

Donations may be made to the fund through the WMU Foundation, P.O. Box 11346, Birmingham, AL 35202-1346. For more information, call the foundation at (205) 408-5525 or e-mail at the following address: wmufoundation@wmu.org.

◆ CWJC clients made meaningful steps to self-sufficiency. Several secured good jobs or enrolled in internship programs. One participant graduated from vocational school on the dean's list. Others returned to the program to be trained as mentors. Professions of faith also were reported from a majority of sites.

WMU also released products to support the ministry. One is the video "Christian Women's Job Corps: From Dependency to Self-Sufficiency." The latest product is a CWJC paperback edition of the Contemporary English Version Bible. Call WMU's Customer Service at 1-800-968-7301 to purchase these items.

For information on CWJC, contact the state WMU office or Trudy Johnson at Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283; phone (205) 991-4972; or e-mail cwjc@WMU.org.

Christian Women's Job Corps comes to Tupelo

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

"This is an historic occasion. You are the very first to receive this training in Mississippi," Ralph Cain reported to a group of about 30 men and women at First Church, Tupelo, on the morning of Jan. 8.

Cain is the Director of Outreach for Lee Association in Tupelo.

are baffled by it, so are we. Poverty is a complicated issue. But this is a program that offers hope."

The basic approach of CWJC is mentoring. Through an assessment process, a woman on welfare is identified and paired with a Christian woman who serves as a mentor. Both mentor and client agree to a covenant relationship. The program then offers Bible study, life skills, and job skills training programs.

Edna Ellison, consultant for Mississippi WMU, said, "We want to give women hope and help them understand that the future can be different from what the past was."

"CWJC helps move women from dependency to self-sufficiency," Ellison said.

According to a brief paper by Dellanna O'Brien, national WMU Executive Director/Treasurer, CWJC had its beginning in July 1994 when a group of WMU leaders gathered to discuss finding a way to assist women in poverty.

Out of those discussions pilot projects were initiated. In March 1997 the pilot phase of CWJC closed with the enthusiastic evaluation that CWJC works.

On May 29, 1997, WMU was honored by having CWJC named as one of only 18 charter members of vice-president Al Gore's Welfare to Work Coalition to Sustain Success.

In August 1997, 150 persons from across the country gathered in Birmingham for the first

national training. CWJC is certain to grow, O'Brien concluded.

Lee Association hopes to begin a job corps program by March of this year. However, they intend to have a broader focus than simply training women in need.

"We have men out of jobs, who need mentoring. We have men who are single parents," Cain said.

Other participants in the training came from Bruce, Rankin County, and North Delta Association.

There were also three women from Tennessee who came for the training.

Ellison said there will be additional training opportunities later in the year. For more information contact Ellison at WMU, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800; or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Christian Women's Job Corp

MISSION STATEMENT: "To provide a Christian context in which women in need are equipped for life and employment; and a missions context in which women help women."

8 KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S JOB CORP

1. a mentor for every client
2. a covenant with every client and mentor
3. Bible study
4. networking
5. needs assessment
6. advisory council
7. certification/ training
8. evaluation



FIRST THINGS FIRST — Edna Ellison (second from left), consultant for the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, joins in prayer at the Christian Women's Job Corps training event Jan. 8 in Tupelo. (Photo by Carl M. White)

The training he referred to is for a new Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) initiative called the Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC). Cain was one of a group of six Mississippians who attended a national training conference for CWJC in Birmingham this past summer.

The purpose of CWJC is to provide a Christian context for helping women in poverty learn the life skills needed for employment that will help break the cycle of poverty.

"Many come from poverty," Cain said. "No one really understands poverty. If you

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 15, 1998

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

1998 CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCES

"Keeping your church OUT of court"



PURPOSE: To provide information on how churches can carefully conduct their affairs under county, state and national laws and do so in a manner that provides some legal insulation from lawsuits.

TARGET AUDIENCE: church business administrators, church staff, personnel committee members, finance committee members, church trustees, legal professionals dealing with issues concerning liabilities of churches and non-profit organizations.

REGISTRATION FEE: \$35 (includes 154-page notebook)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS: William R. Korb, Jr., Sheila L. Korb, Michael V. Bourland, all attorneys with Bourland, Smith, Wall & Wenzel law firm in Fort Worth, Texas, and general counsel to Tarrant Baptist Association, Inc. and trust and estate counsel to Baylor University; William Townsend, assistant dean of the Mississippi College School of Law.

JANUARY 22, 1998

Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson
787 E. Northside Drive

JANUARY 23, 1998

Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo
501 West Main Street

Sponsored by:

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries and Church-Minister Relations and Annuity Departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, Metro Baptist Association, Jackson Lee Baptist Association, Tupelo

Women's Evangelism Conference

February 6-7, 1998

6 p.m. Friday registration-noon Saturday
\$20 per person (includes lunch and program)
Woodland Hills Baptist Church, Jackson

Don't miss hearing the new national women's evangelism consultant from the North American Mission Board, Jaye Martin. Workshops include How to Keep Your Children from the Occult, Lifestyle Evangelism, and Event Evangelism. For more information, call the WMU office at 1-800-748-1651.

Registration Form

Women's Evangelism Conference

Church _____ Association _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Amount enclosed: \$20 x no. of persons _____ = \$ _____ (total)

Make checks payable to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Send to: WMU - Women's Evangelism Conference, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530



March 27-28, 1998
First Baptist Church,
Richland

Special Guest Speaker Barry St. Clair

Barry, founder and executive director of Reach Out Ministries, has a passion for motivating students to live their lives for Christ and share Christ with their friends.



Special Guest: "Face to Face" drama group

This year there will be a special Youth Ministry Lab for all youth leaders and youth ministers during the festival. The brochure with conference descriptions and registration information will be out soon. Please call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 to be put on the mailing list.

1998 Summer Schedule for Glorieta

Cameo Conference	May 24-29
Homeschool Family Vacation 1	May 25-June 3
Homeschool Family Vacation 2	June 4-7
Summer Youth Celebration 1	June 1-5
Sunday School 1	June 12-15
Sunday School 2	June 15-19
Sunday School 3	June 19-22
Sunday School 4	June 22-26
Small Church Leadership	June 26-29
National Urban & Multicultural Leadership	June 29-July 3
Texas Family Week	July 4-10
Church Music	July 11-17
Discipleship & Family Development	
Summer Youth Celebration 2	July 18-21
Summer Youth Celebration	July 20-24
Jericho 1	July 24-27
Jericho 2	July 27-31
Youth Jericho	July 24-31
National Conference on Church Leadership	Aug. 1-5/Aug. 3
National Conference on Church Leadership	Aug. 1-5/Aug. 3
Student Week	Aug. 8-14
Experiencing God Through Revival	Aug. 15-21
Centrifuge (weekly)	May 26-August 7



Conference Information:

February 7, 1998

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

First Baptist Church, Jackson

Conference Cost:

\$22 (includes lunch)

Featuring:

Dick Purnell

Executive Director, Single Life Resources

Registration Deadline:

February 2

A Singles Conference
co-sponsored by the
Discipleship & Family Ministry
Department.

For more information, call
First Baptist Church, Jackson
at 949-1906.

*The correct time for
Area 1 Keyboard Festival at
Colonial Hills Baptist Church, Southaven,
is 9:30 a.m.-Noon
on Saturday, January 31, 1998.*

Toward a Growing Marriage seminar to be held

A practical seminar for Christian couples – married or thinking about getting married – who want to have God's best in marriage, will take place in Jackson on Feb. 20-21, 1998, at Broadmoor Baptist church.

The seminar, entitled "Toward a Growing Marriage," will be led by Gary Chapman, author of the best-selling book, "The Five Love Languages," and a book with the same title as the seminar.

Co-sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Discipleship and Family Ministry Department and the Baptist Sunday School Board, the program will offer practical ways to make good marriages better and how to help friends and family members who are

experiencing marital stress.

Topics include how to communicate in the midst of conflict, how to avoid financial bondage, how to make sex a mutual joy, and how to rekindle love or keep it alive.

The seminar begins on Friday evening at 7, and continues on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring a sack lunch on Saturday.

Chapman is director of adult ministries at Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Early registration saves money at \$35 for individuals; \$65 for married or engaged couples. At the door the cost is \$45 for individuals; \$75 for couples.



...And they will become one flesh. Genesis 2:24

SEMINAR COST

	Individual	Engaged or Married Couple
Early Registration Fee:	\$35	\$65
Registration Fee:	\$45	\$75

REGISTRATION

Return registration form to your seminar coordinator or mail to: Chapman Seminars
Post Office Box 24001 • Nashville, TN 37203.
For more information or to register call 800/254-2022.

*Co-sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____

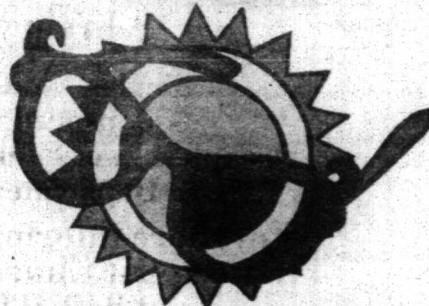
CHURCH GROUP _____

CIRCLE AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$65 FOR COUPLE \$35 FOR INDIVIDUAL

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD

Something New Something "Cool"

Older Children's Retreat
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
July 16-18, 1998
Cost: \$75



"Cool in the Sun"

This retreat is especially for children who have completed grades 4-6 and their leaders. A registration form is available in the 1998 Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Information Brochure. To obtain a brochure, call Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at (228) 452-7261.

STATE-WIDE GROWTH SPIRAL CONFERENCE

February 10, 1998
38th Avenue Baptist Church
Hattiesburg, Miss.
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Conference Fee: \$5 (Includes lunch and program materials)

Conference Leader: Jerri Herring, consultant, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville

Schedule

8:30	Conference Registration/Fellowship
9:00-11:30	Conference
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-2:00	Conference
2:00	Dismiss

Growth Spiral Pre-Registration Form

Church Name _____
Complete Church Address (include zip) _____

Name of Person Making Reservation _____

Daytime phone _____
No. of People Attending _____

Mail to: Sunday School Dept., P. O. Box 530, Jackson,
MS 39205-0530 PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE ON SEPARATE FORM



GA/ACTEENS CAMPUS DAYS



BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE
November 1
11 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE
January 24
3 p.m.-7 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
February 21
11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Missionaries • Basketball • Music
Cheerleaders • Testimonies

COST: \$7.50

(includes: basketball game, meal, program, and limited insurance)

1997-98 Mississippi GA/Acteens Special Days

REGISTRATION FORM

Church _____ Association _____
Contact Person _____ Phone _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Event _____

Deadline: Monday, prior to events
No refunds after deadline, however, substitutions may be made

Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and send to:
GA/Acteens Special Days
Woman's Missionary Union
P. O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

Number of attendees _____ x \$7.50 per person = \$ _____ (total enclosed)

UBS Early Bird Clinic
February 9, 1998
Baptist Building Chapel,
Jackson
9 a.m.-noon

MISSION: To acquaint church leaders with StarQuest: A Galactic Good News Adventure

UBS Shuttle Sampler and Flight Manuals will be on display and available for purchase.



**Be Ready to Blast-off in
1998!**

The galaxy is the limit for StarQuest: A Galactic Good News Adventure.

Pray this day for...

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

Love Added To Prayer Increases Its Power

One survey of ten thousand men with heart disease found a fifty-percent reduction in frequency of chest pain (angina) in married men who perceived their wives as supportive and loving. As the faith healer Agnes Sanford wrote, "When we pray in accordance with the law of love, we pray in accordance with the will of God."

- "When Science Investigates Prayer" by Larry Dossey, M.D. in Guideposts

16
Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (Christian Action Commission Emphasis) Gov. Fordice has proclaimed January as "Month of Prayer to End Abortion" in the state of Mississippi. Commit to pray for the Lord's interaction with His people that legislative and judicial leaders will affirm again the sanctity of human life.

17
For Baptist Men's Day, sponsored by Brotherhood Dept. Many special programs during the month of December have attracted the interest of non-Christians to the gospel message in eastern South America. Pray that churches will be active in the follow-up of visitors and those making inquiries.

18
For A Gift of Celebration, Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson, sponsored by the Witness Team in conjunction with the Evangelism Conference; 19-20, State Evangelism Conference, Alta Woods BC, Jackson, sponsored by the Evangelism Dept.

19
For Area Vocal, Conducting, Instrumental Festivals, Highland BC, Meridian/Baptist Building, Jackson, sponsored by Church Music Dept. Pray for the attempt to get a Turkish New Testament into the hands of every Turkish family in Germany.

20
For Bivo Ministers/Wives Fellowship, Bo-Don's Restaurant, Jackson, sponsored by Church Admin.-Pastoral Ministries; Pray for the evangelization of the people in the Oueme Valley in Benin. Missionaries Bob and Becky Couts asked us to pray for God's provision and timing as they consider moving there.

*See below

21

21
Beginning in 1998, Taiwan will move from a six-day to a five-day work week. Pray that the churches in Taipei will be creative in approaching this unique opportunity to touch the lives of the lost.

22
Namibia is reported to be 95 percent Christian by some groups, yet few truly know Christ as their Savior. Pray that Namibia's population of complement church members will experience a life-changing relationship with Jesus.

23

23
For Church Business Administrators Conference, Broadmoor BC, Jackson, sponsored by Church Admin.-Pastoral Ministries Dept.; for Area Vocal, Conducting, Instrumental Festival; Petal Harvey BC, Petal, sponsored by Church Music Dept.

24
For Area Keyboard Festivals, FBC, Tupelo; FBC, Clinton; FBC, McComb; FBC, Laurel; FBC, Hattiesburg; Fairview BC, Columbus sponsored by Church Music Department.

25

16
For North Mississippi Singles Rally, FBC, Olive Branch, sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry; 16-17, Design Your Sunday School, Ridgecrest BC, Madison, sponsored by Sunday School Dept.; 16-17, Church Orchestra Festival, Pearl High School, Pearl, sponsored by Church Music Dept.

17
For South Miss. Singles Rally, Cov/Jeff Davis FLC, sponsored by D&FM Dept. Pray for Muslims around the world during this month of Ramadan. Pray for the suffering people of Algeria. During the past 5 years of violence, it is estimated that 75,000 people have been murdered. Pray that the gospel of Christ will go through that nation in the power of the Holy Spirit.

18
For GA/Acteens Campus Day, William Carey College, sponsored by WMU Dept. Pray for good health for all of our missionaries serving in Benin. Several have been battling difficult illnesses of various types, in addition to the usual malaria.

19

*For Area Vocal, Conducting, Instrumental Festival, North Oxford BC, Oxford, sponsored by Church Music Dept. Pray for a lady whose husband left her soon after their first baby was born. During that difficult time, she came to know Christ as her Savior. She and her husband will be reuniting their family this month. Pray that he will accept Christ and that they will be able to forgive past hurts and build a beautiful family for the Lord.

MARCH

6-91 MISS HANNA R. VILLEGAS
Casilla de Correo 46, Alvarado 9, 50019 Cordoba, ARGENTINA
Parents: Edwin and Janet, General Evangelism

9-82 MR. DAVID SONG
431 Tee Street, Biloxi, MS 39532
Parents: Woong Ho & Soo Je, Field Personnel Assistance

9-84 MR. CHARLES R. WILKINS
P. O. Box 835, 6307 Larnaca, CYPRUS
Parents: David & Janie, Mission Administrator

15-97 MISS ABIGAIL HEWITT
Baptist Medical Centre, Box 50, Nalerigu, via Gambaga, GHANA
Parents: Earl & Mona

16-93 MR. DAVID A. VAUGHN
Caixa Postal 625, 95.001-970 Caxias do Sul, RS, BRAZIL
Parents: John & Kathy, General Evangelism

24-89 MISS ROBYN L. KYZAR
c/o UECB Russia, International Post Office, P. O. Box 171, Moscow 101000 RUSSIA
Parents: Russell & Melinda, Literature Distribution/Promo.

26-79 MR. DERON K. MEILSTRUP
Mississippi College, P. O. Box 4943, Clinton, MS 39058
Parents: Dennis & Sherrie, Music Promotion, SERVE IN ARGENTINA

27-88 MISS ALLISON L. MARTIN
Casilla de Correo 5, 8400 San Carlos de Bariloche, ARGENTINA
Parents: Asbury & Hope, General Evangelism

29-97 MR. JASON BROWN
P. O. Box 30018, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, MALAWI
Parents: John & Claudia, General Evangelism



Building For the 21st Century



Preschool/Children Leadership Festival

A Conference for Reaching and Teaching Future Generations

Trinity Baptist Church
Southaven, Mississippi
May 1-2, 1998

Registration begins 3 p.m. Friday
Program concludes Saturday, 12:15 p.m.

Program fee: \$12.50
Catfish dinner Friday night: \$6

A ministry of
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
and Tennessee Baptist Convention

For more information, call the Sunday School Department
at 1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 locally.

CALVINISM HAS PLACE

Editor:

Last week I came across the (Dec. 4) letter written by Kenneth Rowe from Charleston, giving a brief but accurate history of John Calvin and his attempt at theocracy in Geneva.

He commits a grave error, however, in stating that Calvinism in its original form is a totalitarian religion. Calvinism as an "ism" did not really come into being until the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619.

John Calvin died in 1564. Calvinism is a theology, not a theocracy or religion.

By saying that Calvinism has no place among Southern Baptists, Rowe would erase the first 50 years of Southern Baptist history for indeed the presidents for the first 50 years of our convention were included in the Calvinist camp.

He would also minimize the tremendous contributions to our Baptist life made by the first editor of The Baptist Record, J. B. Gambrell.

I cannot believe a person who purports to be knowledgeable of history would say that great SBC leaders such as P. H. Mell, John Broadus, B. H. Carroll, Basil Manly Sr., W. B. Johnson, J. P. Boyce, and even Lottie Moon should have no place in the Baptist faith.

Now, I'm not saying that Rowe or any other Baptist has to be a Calvinist in order to be a

good Southern Baptist.

I am saying however, no matter how much Rowe is offended by the Doctrines of Grace, he has to recognize reality that Calvinism has always had a place in our Southern Baptist history.

Cary F. Worthington, pastor
West Laurel Church, Laurel

OBSERVE THE BIRTH

Editor:

I read the letter in the Jan. 1 issue of The Baptist Record where the writer stated that Jesus never asked us to celebrate his birthday nor did he tell us the actual date.

The writer wondered why Jesus is bound in the baby wrappings of his day and is kept in that helpless state all during the Christmas season.

I feel that Christians should observe the birth of the Savior.

The date of birth is unknown, but the fact of the birth is known. It is a good time to teach our children about his birth, taking the account of the Old Testament prophecy and the actual fulfillment.

We need to tell of his life, why he came, and what he did for us at Calvary and at his resurrection and ascension.

Christmas is more than an isolated event. It is at the heart of God's eternal plan of redemption.

For this plan to be activated

in history it was necessary that God should share in your experience and mine, apart from sin, and he did. In Christ the eternal God became flesh and dwelt among us (I John 1:14).

So, at the Christmas season we are reminded that God has shared in our need and weakness. Christ never ceased to be God, but he also became man. He is God-Man in whom resides the nature of both God and man and in whom God and man meet in reconciliation.

Jim Burke
Waynesboro

VOUNTEERS NEEDED

Editor:

God willing, a team of Mississippi Baptist volunteers will travel to Barquisimeto, Venezuela, April 25-May 4 to complete construction of the second floor of a church building that was begun in 1997.

El Dios Viviente Iglesia Bautista — the Baptist Church of The Living God — has occu-

pied the ground floor of the building and members are praying for volunteers to help finish the upper level.

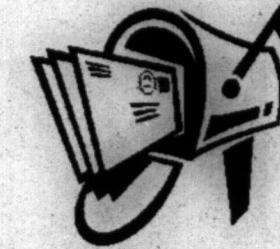
Missionary Sam Paris has requested a welder, an electrician, several block layers, several carpenters, and of course helpers to join this project.

Backyard Bible Club activities are also planned to run concurrently with the construction project, and volunteers who would like to work with the youth and children are invited to join the team.

Last year's translator, Joyce Lampe', will be unable to return this year so a Spanish speaking translator is also requested.

Anyone interested in joining this team should contact Bill Hardy, director of the Mississippi Baptist Partnership Missions Office at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, as soon as possible.

Danny Clifton
Louisville



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Howell W. Todd, president of Mississippi College, was one of 38 community leaders invited to attend a BellSouth seminar in Atlanta to develop new strategies for growth in the economy and quality of life of the South. Among the priorities defined by the group of business, government, and education executives were expanded trade with Latin America, more local advocacy for effective trade policies, foreign language requirements for students in kindergarten through 12th grade, and investment in early childhood development. BellSouth provided four days of courses on internationalization, political economics, technology, and public policy as part of its community involvement program.

General registration for the Spring Trimester at William Carey College will begin Feb. 3 in Tatum Court on the Hattiesburg campus. The

spring term will begin Feb. 23 and end May 14. For more information about registration, or for advisement, call the Registrar's Office at (800) 962-5991 or (601) 582-6195.

The Miracles of The Baddour Center will lead in worship through inspirational music and testimony Monday, Jan. 19, at 9:30 a.m. in the Dumas Auditorium on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey College. The 21 singers perform in four-part harmony and are accompanied by an accomplished pianist. Creative arrangements and hours of practice contribute to the success of The Miracles, whose home is The Baddour Center in Senatobia. The Center is a residential community for 180 adults with mental retardation. The concert is free. For more information about The Baddour Center, write to P.O. Box 69, Senatobia MS 38668, or call (601) 562-9666.

Celebrating 65 Years of Baptist Men's Day Observance

FOLLOW CHRIST'S SERVANT EXAMPLE, JANUARY 25, 1998

37-Passenger Cummins Diesel
Allison Transmission
Freightliner Chassis

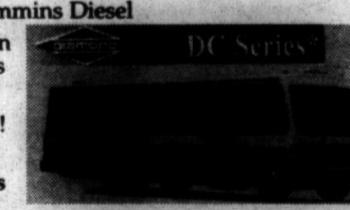
Big Bus Features
at a small bus price!

Diamond Coach
The People Movers

For more info call
RV CITY BUS SALES

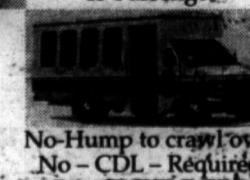
Pine Bluff AR
1-888-515-2353

Jimmy Hicks or Randy Morgan
Parts - Service - Custom Painting

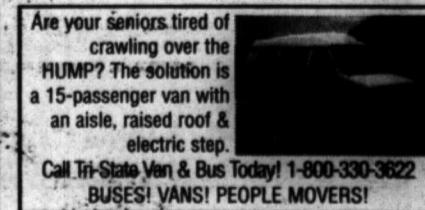


We have many
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NAMES IN THE NEWS



Cason Church, Nettleton, ordained **Byron James** to the gospel ministry on Nov. 11. James will begin studies at Southwestern Seminary in the fall semester. In the meantime, he is available for pulpit supply and can be contacted at (601) 282-7791 or call Wayne Brown, pastor, at (601) 257-1747. Brown is pictured with James and family.

Gus Merritt concluded his position as interim pastor of Hazel Church, Lake, Dec. 28. He is presently available for supply or interim pastor. Merritt may be reached at 108 Oak St., Newton, MS 39345 or (601) 683-2886.

Hardy Church, Grenada, awarded a scholarship in the amount of \$600 to **Julie Anita Magee**, a student at William Carey College. The William R. Moss Memorial Ministerial Scholarship Fund continues to grow by the taking of an annual special offering in November, memorials, and honorariums. Since 1977, when the program began, Hardy Church has awarded scholarships to 26 students pursuing an education toward Christian service.

Chet Estes III, a member of First Church, Union, and son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Estes Jr. of Union, was awarded 1997 outstanding member, Clarinet section, The Pride of Mississippi, University of Southern

Mississippi, during an Awards Banquet held in Memphis on Dec. 31. The band was in Memphis to participate in the 1998 Liberty Bowl game activities. Estes, a music-education major student enrolled in the College of Arts at USM, plans to teach band and music at the high school level after receiving his master's degree. He is a scholarship student, having received both earned and awarded scholarships, in his field of studies.

Anise Pickering McDaniel, 103, of Clinton, died Jan. 4 of respiratory failure at Methodist Medical Center. Funeral services were held Jan. 6 at First Church, Clinton. McDaniel, a native of Hebron Community in Jones County, received her education at Blue Mountain College from 1916-1918. She also received an Honorary Doctorate from Mississippi College (MC) and was chairperson of the 1996 Fund



New Elbethel Church, Oxford, held a deacon ordination service Dec. 7. Ordained were **Robert Barbee**, **Boyd Hillhouse**, and **Gerald Stanford**. Delivering the charges were Don Stanfill, director of missions, Lafayette-Marshall Association, and Jimmy Sockwell, former pastor. Pictured (from left) are Ron Jenkins, pastor; Travis Patterson, deacon; Hillhouse; Stanford; Sockwell; Robert Barbee; Leslie Stewart, deacon; James Barbee, deacon; George Estock, deacon, and Stanfill.

Raising Campaign at MC. Survivors include four daughters: Anise M. Brock of Moss Point, Annette M. Robertson of Hattiesburg, Sara M. Davis of Savannah, Tenn., and Jane M. Wade of Ocean Springs; sons, Major C. McDaniel Jr. of Clinton, and Jack Willis McDaniel of Jackson; brother, Ransom Pickering of Ocala, Fla.; sisters, Willis Mae King of Union City, Ga., Elizabeth Estes of Jackson, and Eleanor Tidwell of Booneville; 14 grandchildren; 21 great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild. McDaniel was preceded in death by her husband, Major C. McDaniel. Memorials may be made to the McDaniel Scholarship Fund, Mississippi College, Clinton, or to First Baptist Church, Library Fund, Clinton.

Phoenix Church, Puckett graduated from Pinola High School and Mississippi State College for Women (MSCW). Puckett lived in Brooksville and Durant where her husband pastored. Since 1951 she and her husband, J. Niles Puckett, who served as the founder professor of Bible and Greek, have contributed to the building and establishment of Grand Canyon University. Survivors including her husband; are daughter, Kathy Baker of Marietta, Ga.; son, John Puckett of Laguna Niguel, Calif.; sister, Kathleen Stovall of Jackson; brothers, George T. Bush of Atlanta, Ga., and E. C. Bush of Birmingham, Ala.; and four grandchildren. Memorials may be made to The Puckett Center for Christian Studies, Grand Canyon University, 3300 West Camelback Road, Phoenix, AZ 85061-1097.

STAFF CHANGES

Parkway Church, Natchez, has called **Bart M. Walker** as pastor, effective Jan. 4. Walker previously pastored Evans Creek Church, Pearl River, La. A native of Georgia, he received his education at North Georgia College and New Orleans Seminary.



Walker

Association, has called **Danny Von Kanel** as minister of music and senior adults, effective Jan. 11. A native of Pascagoula, Von Kanel received his education at William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.

Tommy Williamson, a native of Albertville, Ala., has been called as pastor of Mount Olive Church, Carroll County, effective Dec. 1. Williamson is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary, Memphis, Tenn. He has served churches in Tennessee, Georgia, and Mississippi.

Robert Perry, pastor at Macedonia Church, Brookhaven, for 10 years has announced his retirement from the pastorate. He has pastored churches in Mississippi for the past 46 years. Perry will be available for supply, revivals, Bible conference, and interim. His new address after Feb. 1 will be 3211 Barnett Drive, Pearl, MS 39208; or phone: (601) 932-4561.

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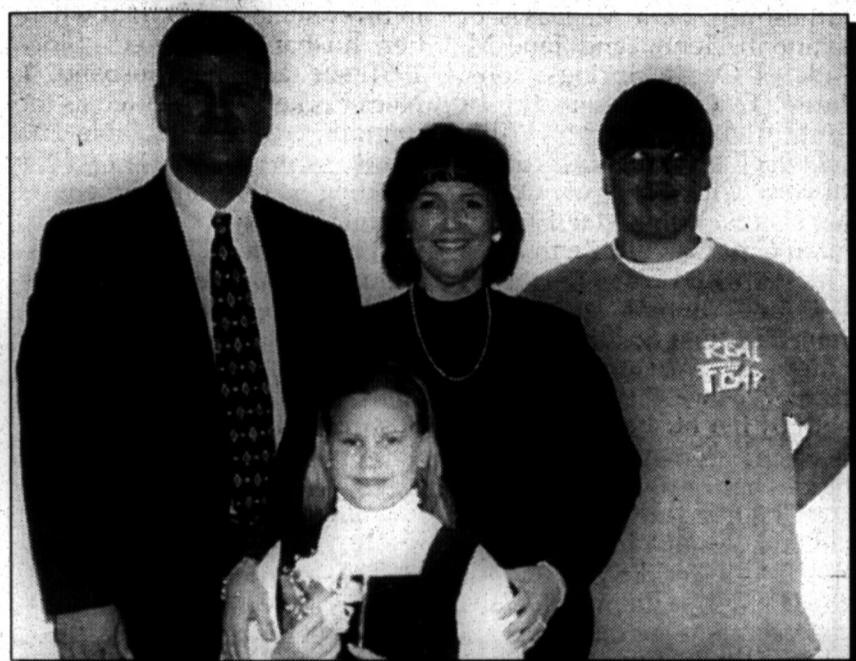
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JUST FOR THE RECORD



First Church, Grenada, honored its staff in the morning worship service on Nov. 30. Each staff member was recognized for their years of service to the church and given a gift of appreciation. Pictured (above from left) are Carolyn Tillmon, Shirley Baker Jones, Kathy Shackelford, Bob Haley, Cordelia Reed, and Lynda Pinnix. First Church also recognized Huey Dedmon and his family with a gift of appreciation and a church wide luncheon given in their honor. He has continued to serve during a time when the church was without a pastor and minister of music. Pictured (below from left) are Huey, Whitney, Debbie, and Brian Dedmon.



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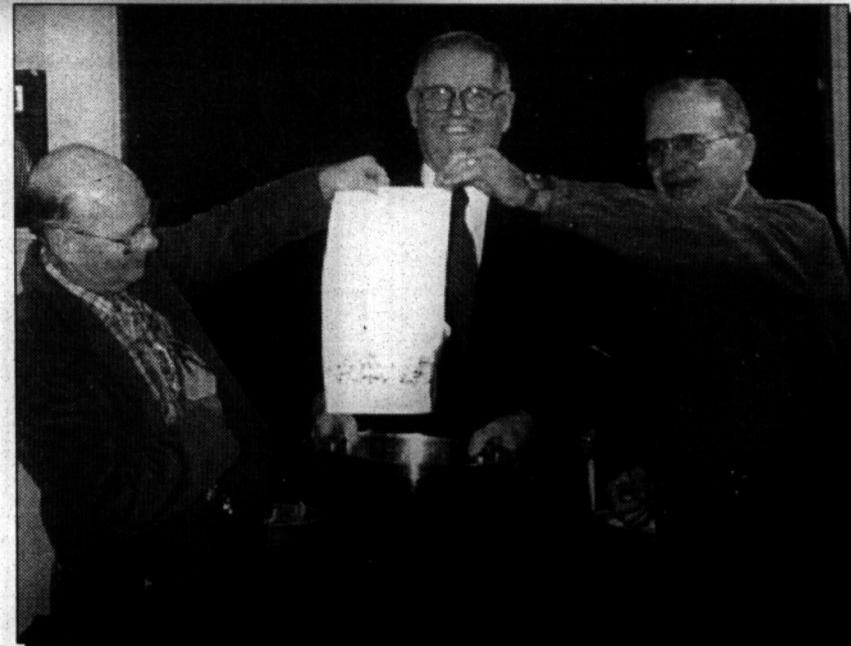
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Philip Price, education and youth director at Wade Church, Pascagoula, and his wife Terri were honored with a surprise reception on Nov. 2 for three years of service.

Making the Pieces Fit, a Woman's Conference, will be held at First Church, Clinton, on Jan. 17 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The cost is \$20. For more information call (601) 924-6705.

Luther Rice Seminary Alumni Association will meet in Jackson on Jan. 20 during the State Evangelism Conference. The meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m. at the Western Sizzlin', 3090 Hwy 80 West. "It is not necessary but would help us to plan if we know how many will be attending," said Robert H. Perry, president. For further information, call Perry at (601) 833-6760.



Faith Church, Hickory Flat, held a note burning which made the church debt free on Dec. 1. The church was constituted April 1, 1984, and purchased the property on Dec. 30, 1986. The mortgage was paid off five years early. Pictured (from left) are John Bumpas, deacon; Bill Dowdy, pastor; and Ellis Perkins, deacon.

'God With Us' author gratified by response

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communications Director

The principal author of the Christian musical, "God With Us," likes to quote Psalms in noting that God is enthroned on the praises of his people.

"It does always seem to surprise us when we sense the presence of God in a new and fresh way, and it will happen on the 19th of January," said Don Moen from his Integrity Music office in Nashville.

On that date, a choir of at least 2,500 will present Moen's musical at 7 p.m. in the Mississippi Coliseum on the fairgrounds in Jackson.

The Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra with 200 participants will accompany the choir. (Please see page five of this issue for additional details.)

"God wants to save those who are lost, heal those who are sick, encourage those who are depressed, provide strength for the weak. These are things that

happen in God's presence," Moen said.

"When we created 'God With Us,' I wanted to deal with the basics — the ABCs of praise and worship. I didn't want to do anything aggressive to scare people away; I wanted to provide a vehicle to make them feel comfortable to grow in a deeper worship experience," he explained.

Minnesota native Moen, who attended the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg for a year-and-a-half on a violin scholarship, said he loves seeing churches come together around the central theme of worship, "because worship is trans-denominational. The exciting thing to me is everybody leaves their denominational badges at the door, and (they) are focused and united about the theme of exalting Christ."

Moen said a sequel to "God With Us" will be premiered in April at a workshop in San Diego. The title: "God For Us."

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Attitudes that harm relationships

Genesis 37:3-11; 25-28

By Edna Martin Ellison

When unhealthy attitudes fester within families or other relationships, the results are disastrous. The next five weeks we will focus on Joseph, Jacob's son: his forced removal to Egypt, his imprisonment on false charges, his rise to power, the amazing reunion with his long-lost brothers, and his final declaration of God's goodness. Joseph sets a good example of someone who lived a lifetime in the presence of God.

Favoritism Leads to Jealousy (v. 3). Jacob loved

Joseph more than his other sons. Think how they felt, as their father made no secret that he loved Joseph best. He was absolutely wrong to show favoritism by giving Joseph a special coat, a "coat of many colors" or "a richly ornamented robe." Whatever it looked like, it must have been *some* coat!

Favoritism is a manifestation of an unhealthy attitude in relationships. Sometimes parents fall into this pattern of favoritism, which can lead to a dysfunctional family. Jacob's family was indeed dysfunctional.



Ellison

Jealousy Leads to Noncommunication (v. 4). It is no surprise that Joseph's brothers hated him. Jealous of the attention their father gave him, they "could not speak a kind word to him." (or "could not speak to him on friendly terms.") Imagine the strained conversations at

mealtimes or during chores if every word was spoken in anger. Trouble was brewing.

Noncommunication Leads to Self-centeredness (vv. 5-11). Unhealthy attitudes grew when Joseph—insensitive to their feelings—told them he had two dreams that he was more respected than they were. "They hated him all the more" (v. 8). Not communicating openly, Joseph became more self-centered. The brothers also became self-centered, seething

in their jealousy (v. 11). Jacob did not encourage them to communicate, air their differences, and settle the conflict. He "kept the matter (of the dreams) in mind," pondering the situation without speaking of it. A family torn apart by selfishness and jealousy became polarized and isolated.

Self-centeredness Leads to Disaster (vv. 23-28). Violence erupted as a result of self-centeredness, anger, and jealousy. Joseph's brothers took off his coat and threw him into a dry cistern (vv. 23-24). Some of them would have been happy to see him die there, but Judah, the most humane brother, suggested an alternative. They accepted his plan and sold Joseph to a passing caravan of Ishmaelite traders (vv. 25-28). What a horrible ending to a bout of sibling rivalry!

Questions to Consider:

1. Do you show favoritism in your family? Is one child more lovable than others? Is one the scapegoat for problems? Examine your motives in administering discipline or giving special privileges.

2. Consider your feelings against co-workers, in-laws, or others: Do you show favoritism when you shouldn't? Have you allowed hatred and jealousy or other unhealthy attitudes to grow?

3. Joseph was insensitive in sharing his dream. Are you alert to feelings around you?

4. In any of your relationships, is trouble brewing because you have not cleared the air and resolved the conflict? Consider the potential for disaster if you do not face and resolve unhealthy attitudes. Pray for God's help and wisdom.

Ellison is a consultant in the Miss. Woman's Missionary Union.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Protecting the helpless

Gen. 1:28a; Deut. 18:10a; Ps. 139:13-15;
Matt. 19:13-15

By Debbie Sills

Today is a day set aside to remind us of the value of human life. Some consider children to be a burden. Some do not think an unborn baby is of any value because life to them does not begin until they say it begins. People try to rationalize not having a child — not enough time, too much responsibility, too young, too old, unplanned, etc. Satan has many forms, but he has not been able to get around the Bible. God says he loves children and knows them before they are even formed.

Promoting the Gift of Life



Sills

(Gen. 1:28a). There are people in our society today who feel our world is too corrupt a place to bring children into. However, God commanded us to multiply. He wants us to have children and raise them in a Christian home. Children are a precious gift from God — a gift he expects us to take care of and protect. As adults we have the responsibility of their well being.

Preserving the Gift of Life (Deut. 18:10a). With all of our technological inventions we look to the past and say how far advanced we are. We have emerged from the dark ages and no longer rely on

"the old way of doing things." Have we really come that far? In Deuteronomy, God commanded the Israelites not to offer their children as sacrifices. Today, killing a baby has become an accepted birth control method. Each day, hundreds of infants, many nine months developed, are murdered and thrown out with the waste. Convenience? No, a sacrifice — a sacrifice to work, money, beauty, and freedom to do whatever one wants.

Praising God for the Gift of Life (Ps. 139:13-15). In this passage, the psalmist praises God for making him while he was still in his mother's womb. God knew us, formed us, and loved us before we were ever born. We were so valuable in fact that God himself helped form our inward parts, our personality, and our bodies. God should be praised for his wonderful cre-

ation of life. God created the world and everything on it, but remember, he is still creating. Everytime a child is conceived, it is God's work.

Prizing the Gift of Life (Matt. 19:13-15). Jesus gives us a tremendous example we all should follow. The disciples did not feel they had time to tend to the children. However, Jesus commanded the disciples to let the children come to him. He took time with them first, and then left. How many children are starved for attention. How can we possibly expect them to do the right things if they are not taught the difference between right and wrong? Children are important and should be valued higher than anything in this world.

Does God value human life? Does he expect us to value life? Look at this true story and decide.

A twenty-six year old single actress traveling in the States with a small theater group walked into a Crisis Pregnancy

Center one day. She was four weeks late for her period, and her live-in boyfriend suggested she be seen by a doctor. She decided the free services of the clinic worked better for her pocketbook. Her pregnancy test was positive and counseling began with her on the importance of this child's life and why she should keep the baby and not abort the new life within her. It was only then she revealed that five weeks before an abortion had been performed on her. She knew she was pregnant and since a baby would interfere with her career, she chose to have an abortion before she left England. That baby had survived! Man's hands could not touch what God had created and protected!

Sills is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

LIFE AND WORK

Suicide and assisted suicide

I Sam. 31:1-6; Ps. 94:17-19, 139:15-16;
Jer. 10:23; James 5:10-11

By Don Lum

Suicide — It is not the unpardonable sin, neither is it God's plan for us. God's plan is to bring life and life to the full. Because we believe in the sovereignty and power of God, we can trust him to bring us into his presence when he sees fit. The prominence and justification today of assisted suicide is just another way Satan has fooled us into thinking God's way is not best and that we must take control ourselves.

Human life should be cherished no matter what the circumstances from the time of conception until God takes us home.

As we look at these passages today, ask God to renew your



Lum

insight into the precious gift of life. Even though there can be much suffering in this temporal body, we can trust God's plan for us.

Desperate People Do Desperate Things (1 Sam. 31:1-6). Even though there are only a few cases of suicide in the Bible, it is there. People have had the same kinds of problems since Adam and Eve. This passage describes the tragic end of a man who had a great future until he decided his way was better than God's way.

Saul and his army were soundly defeated by the Philistines in chapter 31. He feared the torture of the Philistines so he chose to end his own life after being wounded.

He was desperate, but where was God's leadership in his life? A human being on his own can easily find himself desperate, but when the creator of the universe controls your life, how could that be? Many people who have followed God have dealt with difficult and painful circumstances beginning with Jesus himself. Those who were focused on him let him have his way, and he could be glorified in their life or death.

Life Belongs to God (Ps. 139:15-16). What a wonderful, comforting passage! David knew God and realized how intimately he was acquainted with each of his children. "His eyes have seen my unformed substance". God knows me better than I know myself. There is a story told that Henry Ford once came upon someone having car trouble in the early days of automobiles. After Ford offered his help, the

car owner said, "How can you help me?" Ford said, "I made this car; I know how to make it run."

How much more our omnipotent Father who made us knows how to make us run. He is the author of life and can certainly control it from beginning to end. The Psalmist says God knew the days ordained for me before I was born. How encouraging! If I can just trust him step by step, I will never be desperate in this life on earth.

Jeremiah, too, acknowledges that God knows all and can do anything in people's lives.

We are Called to Presevere (James 5:10-11). Think of Job and his endurance. Even though his circumstances were extremely difficult, Job trusted God. Read Job 1:21; 13:15; 19:25 and 42:2 and mark those verses to refer to when things on earth seem bad for you.

James says the outcome of the Lord's dealing was full of compassion and mercy." He tenderly cares for his children even through bad situations. And, the

end was better than the beginning." Job 41:12). God is faithful! It is our part to keep on trusting, no matter what.

God Gives Help and Support (Psalm 94: 17-19). God is there. Over and over in scripture we have recorded examples of God carrying people through. He is the same today. Those of us who know him should be dependent not desperate. We should be dependent on a loving father who not only cares, but has the power to meet our every need.

Conclusion. This lesson teaches us about God's role in our lives. He knows us and has a plan for our individual lives. But, it is only as we live under his lordship that God's plan can be accomplished. So many miss out on so much when they choose their own way. See these scripture passages from God's view this week. Remember, he loves you and knows what is best — always.

Lum is a consultant in the Miss. Baptist Evangelism Dept.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director
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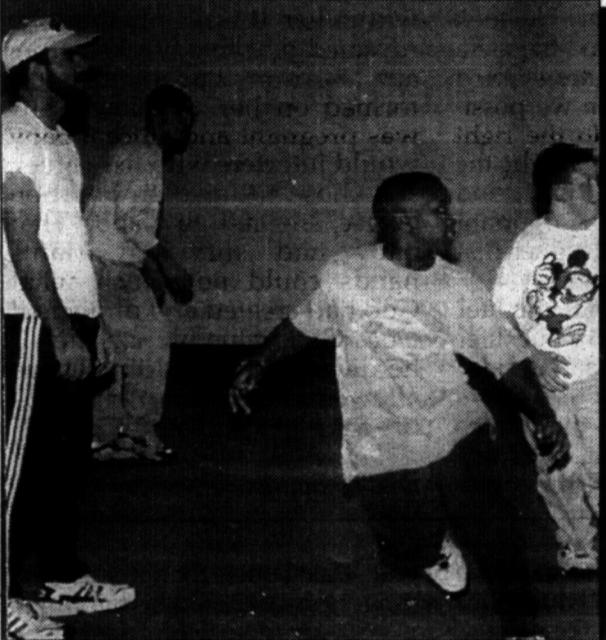
Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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The Mississippi College FCA gave BCV children the wonderful gift of time. Young people enjoyed basketball and other activities with their MC friends.



Luther Lindsey, pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church, Greenwood and his church family members, Bobby Ray and Gay Floyd along with their children were among the many Mississippi individuals who helped to make Christmas for BCV young people a momentous occasion. Surely the warmth and love from so many generous Mississippian has been felt in each child's heart this holiday season. The Baptist Children's Village thanks the many individuals and groups who make Christmas possible through their donation of gifts and money at this holiday season.

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Nathan (left) and Julie (below) are two of the recipients of Merrill Lynch's generosity. Again this year Merrill Lynch invited BCV young people to call friends and family all over the country from their office. Following their time on the telephone, Santa presented the children with gifts and lunch.

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Problem gamblers increasing, study reveals

BOSTON (BP) — Problem gambling isn't just a matter of a psychological disorder such as addiction, a study by the Harvard Medical School division on addictions reports, and it's a problem that affects nearly 10% of youth and college students.

The study was funded by the gambling industry's National Center for Responsible Gaming. Data from 120 gambling studies of adult, adolescent, and special populations published between 1977-97 was utilized, in what experts regard as "the most comprehensive analysis ever of compulsive gambling," according to a New York Times report Dec. 7.

According to the study, "scientists and public policy makers have paid insufficient attention to level 2 (i.e., sub-clinical levels of gambling disorders) gamblers" in the United States and Canada.

The study noted: "Level 2 gamblers are much greater in number than their level 3 counterparts."

Level 2, according to the report, involves "a pattern of gambling that is associated with a wide range of adverse reactions or consequences," while level 3 involves "disordered gambling which satisfies 'diagnostic' criteria."



Additionally, the study cited "a growing percentage of the adult population who are at risk for gambling disorders," said one of its three authors, Howard Shaffer, associate professor of psychology in Harvard Medical School's Department of Psychiatry. "This is significant as gambling disorders have both social and economic costs," Shaffer said in a Harvard Medical School news release.

The increase of legalized gambling during the past 20 years may factor into the increase in adult gambling disorders, Shaffer said.

Among adolescents, the study reported, gambling disorders were significantly more prevalent than among adults.

At level 2 in problem gambling, for example, the study reported 9.45% of youth and 9.28% of college students will reach that level of problem gambling at some point in their lives.

Noting "past-year rates" provide "a better representation" of current statistics, the study noted 14.82% of youth had level 2 gambling problems in the past year.

Utilizing even the more conservative 9.45% figure, an estimated 6.4 million of the nation's 68.7 million youth under age 18 will face level 2 gambling problems during their lives. (The population estimate, by the Department of Commerce, is as of 1995.)

Just as alarming, level 3 gambling disorders will be experienced by 3.88% of youth in their lifetimes, with 5.77% having experienced level 3 problems in the past year, the study reported.

Utilizing the more conservative 3.88% figure, 2.7 million of today's youth will

face level 3 gambling problems in their lifetimes.

Among adults, the study reported 3.85% will face a level 2 gambling problem at some point in their lives, while 2.8% of the adult population were at that level in the past year.

According to the study, "level 2 gamblers represent people who may be moving in two directions: some level 2 gamblers are moving toward an increasingly disordered state, while others are moving toward level 1 gambling. Some level 2 gamblers even may be moving to abstaining from gambling activities. It also is possible that level 2 gamblers may not be moving at all."

Level 1 gamblers are those who face "little or no adverse consequence" from their gambling activities, and they account for the majority of Americans and Canadians who gamble, the study reported.

The study estimated the addiction rate among the adult population increased to 1.29% during a 1994-97 time frame, up from .84% during a 1977-93 time frame.

At present, 1.6% of adults will have a problem with level 3 gambling at some point in their lives, with 1.14% having had level 3 problems in the past year.

Paul Jones of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission and one of the gambling industry's leading opponents, called the Harvard study proof "that gambling is hurting people" and is "a growing problem," both in the "measurable increase of persons who have gambling disorders," and in the disorders being "higher among young people than the general population."

South Carolina latest to encounter gambling woes

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP) — Add South Carolina to the list of states suffering from an acute case of gambling.

Through video poker, South Carolina offers "the nation's widest-open gambling," according to The Wall Street Journal in a front-page article Dec. 2.

"... if you want to do a laboratory test of unregulated gambling, South Carolina is it," anti-gambling attorney Richard Gergel of Columbia told The Journal.

The 31,000 video poker machines in South Carolina — many in restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores — will take in an estimated \$2 billion this year — as much as gas stations across the state. The entire state budget, meanwhile, is \$5.4 billion.

Gamblers Anonymous chapters have jumped to 27 in South Carolina; fours years ago, there were eight.

South Carolina, compared to other states with video poker, "has almost no rules and the ones it does have are unenforced," William Thompson, an expert on gambling and public policy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, told The Wall Street Journal.

"There's no assurance that the machines are honest, there's no electronic monitoring of revenues," Thompson said. "It's a farce." Video poker's \$2 billion '97 take is based on honor-system reporting by gambling operators, The Journal noted.

On the national gambling front, in the first large-scale statistical investigation of gambling and suicide, suicide rates in Las Vegas, with the highest suicide rate in the nation, and Reno, Nev., and Atlantic City, N.J., are up to four times higher than comparably sized cities where gambling is not legal.

The study, by David Phillips, a professor of sociology at the University of California in San Diego, of death certificates in the

three gambling-oriented cities, is reported in the December issue of the journal Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior.

Phillips told The New York Times he got the idea for the study in talking to Gamblers Anonymous telephone counselors in Texas. Callers would say, "I've embezzled all the company's funds, my kids can't go to college, there's no money left for groceries and I don't see any way out," Phillips recounted.

Phillips told The Times that because of a long lag in the compilation of death certificates nationwide, it is not yet possible to determine whether a similar increase in suicide rates has occurred in the 24 states that have legalized casino-type gambling in the last 10 years.

Phillips reported that 1 in 25 visitor deaths on average in Las Vegas is a suicide, four times the national average of 1 in 100 visitor deaths. A visitor death is defined as a death of a person from another state while visiting the city in question.

Phillips also noted that Americans spend nearly as much on gambling — 6% of the G.N.P., according to a Standard & Poor's Corporation 1996 survey — as they do on family groceries — 8%, The Times reported.

In South Carolina, video poker moved from "a back-room game of dubious legality" to "judicial and legislative sanction in the 1990s as a low-stakes, small-scale exception to the (state's) general gambling ban," The Journal recounted. "But because of the weak enforcement, legal loopholes and aggressive litigation by video-poker operators, this narrow breach has blown open to create a multibillion-dollar industry that now afflicts the state's soul. The courts, churches, and legislatures are now locked in a fevered debate over whether the game should be banned outright, or heavily regu-

lated and taxed to support education."

In 1994, 12 of the state's 46 counties voted to ban video poker. But industry lawyers convinced the state Supreme Court in 1996 that the vote was unconstitutional because the state criminal code must be uniformly applied.

"They've hired the best lobbyists in the state and basically bought a lot of support with campaign money," Darrell Jackson, a state senator and minister, told The Journal. Jackson acknowledged receiving contributions from video-poker operators when he first ran for office in 1992 — and later voting in support of industry positions.

Jackson told The Journal he changed his position, however, when one of his constituents came to him for help — as a minister, not as a politician. The woman had gambled away her savings and even spent money her teenage daughter had earned working at a fast-food restaurant and set aside for her college education.

In September, a 10-day-old infant died in a sweltering car while her mother played video poker for hours, The Journal reported, quoting one addict as saying, "I've lost \$38,000 in three years, but what I've really lost is my character. I've lied to my mother, to my wife, to my children. I'd get home two hours late and stop to smear myself with engine grease so I could tell my wife I had battery problems." Another woman told the newspaper, "I wish this was outlawed, because I'm addicted and I can't stop."

"Video poker is the crack cocaine of gambling," Carl Carlin, an addiction counselor at a psychiatric hospital in Aiken, S.C., told The Journal, calling it "insidious" in its "immediacy, intensity and the way it takes over your life."

Bibliocipher

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CUKULISUOUAA, RV. ISNG
EYLC ISU ERWPUX NV
SRA EYD IN IGLC VLNF
RI; RV SU XN CNI IGLC
VLNF SRA EYD, SU
ASYOO XRU RC SRA
RCRZGRID; QGI ISNG SYAI
XUORKULUX ISD ANGO.
UJUPRUO ISRLID -
ISLUU: CRCU

Clue: K=V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs Twenty-Two One